

WALL PAPER

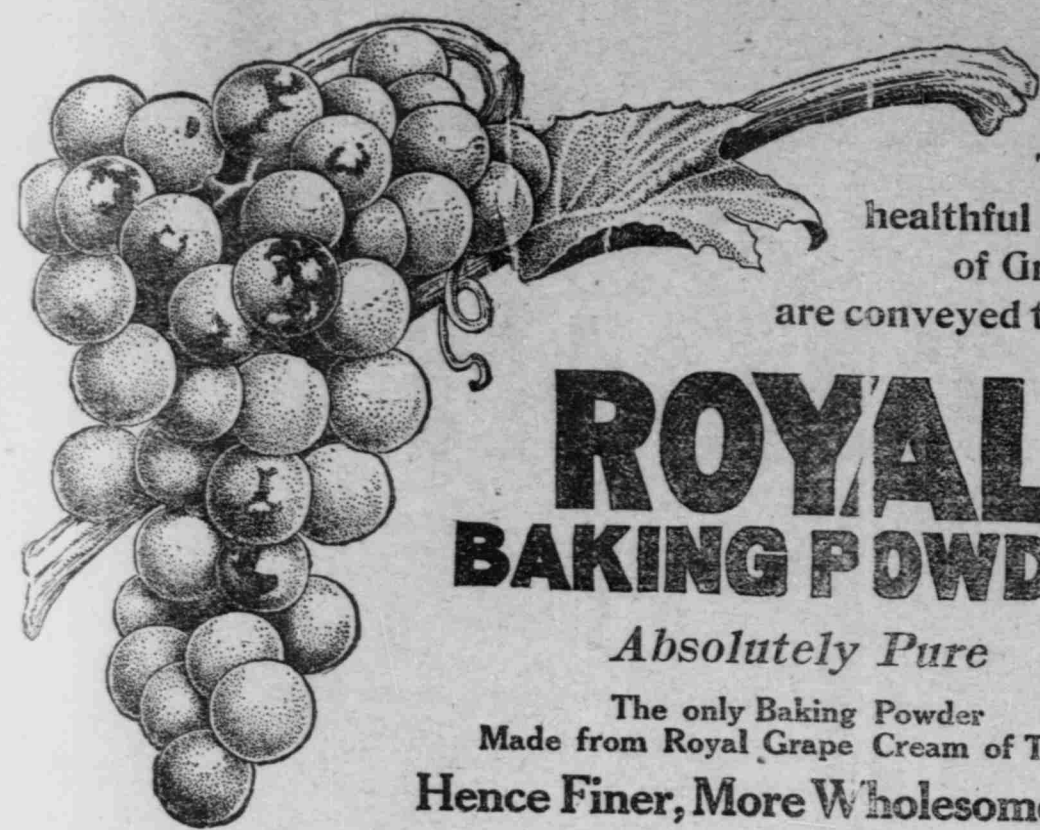
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WALL PAPER



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Letter From Former Madisonian.

Victoria, Texas, Nov. 2 1909.

On the 21st of this month two years ago I left the State of Kentucky and landed in the little town of Commerce, near Texarkana, where I spent the winter, and then went to Plainview, right in the middle of the Staked Plains, that section of the State that was known when I attended school as the Great American Desert. This town of Plainview was found to be a progressive city of more than 3,000 people, situated in a fertile country as could be found anywhere under the sun, over the finest water that ever quenched human thirst. Twenty years ago when we were boys Lano Estacado or Staked Plains was looked upon as having no vegetation at all, was only fit for a few half starved cattle and coyotes to roam over at will. This idea was encouraged by the big cattle kings of that section or those who had by one manner or another gotten possession of large holdings of land, and in

many instances by questionable methods. They did not want the general public to become acquainted with the true conditions on the Plains. They knew this land was of the greatest fertility and that it possessed natural qualities that was unsurpassed by no other territory in the U. S. With the advent of the railroad three years ago, a new era opened for the Plainview country and all that vast and fertile country south and east of it. Prospectors came to look at the country, and many remained to buy and build homes, and today, what was three or four years ago a wide place in the trail, is now a teeming, hustling city of more than 5,000 people, and Plainview can well boast of being the Queen City of the Plains. With her magnificent reinforced cement buildings, some costing as much as \$50,000 and the finest opera house in the state west of St. Louis, and most attractive homes, it is difficult for one to tear himself away from that truly pleasing town.

Several weeks ago I came to Victoria, 925 miles from Plainview, and strange to say, in the same state. Distances in Texas are misleading. We do not think of a hundred miles being anything. A few hours run in a motor car, soon covers that distance, and we are at the other end of the century run. When I got to Victoria, the luxuriant growth of every thing I saw was so different from the Plainview country I marveled at what I saw. Stately palms and gracefully bending banana plants were in evidence on every side, and the most fragrant flowers that ever greeted the seeker after color were seen in greatest profusion in nearly every yard. Really the semi-tropical conditions were so prominent on every side I hardly could believe I had not been transported into some paradise or Garden of Eden.

After I had become acclimated on the feast of flowers and odors and waving foliage, I began to investigate the other conditions. I found here that nearly everything grown under the sun could profitably be produced. That for the general farmer who wished to combine corn, hogs, cattle and hay no place in the state of Texas or any other state could begin to compare with this section. This is the cattleman's natural paradise. They require no shelter. The winters are so mild that cattle are allowed to feed without supplementing with corn or grain, the year round, and this feed is nothing but the natural grass that grows everywhere in this coast country. It is no unusual sight to see several thousand head of cattle in one pasture—but then that pasture may contain ten or fifteen

thousand acres.

Hogs will roll in their own fat in this section, but they have not been raised to any marked extent. The wealthy cattle men have contracted their efforts in the cattle business, and would not fool away any time, as they thought, on hogs. It is cheaper to send to Chicago and buy the lard and hams and bacon than to raise these commodities. This condition, happily, is undergoing rapid change, and the northern farmer is coming into this country and rewildening things. The big ranches are being put on the market, sold to the actual settler in tracts of from ten acres to a quarter section. You will ask "what can a man do on ten acres down there?"

It may be remembered that this is a semi-tropical section, and that we rarely ever have a freeze. The grass is green twelve months in the year, and flowers and fruit are blooming continually. Already the gardeners are putting out their truck to send North in the latter part of January and February. It is no unusual thing to pick strawberries in Christmas and continue until the following June—and all this without protection. Nothing is grown under glass—it is not necessary to have a hot bed to get pepper and tomato plants and the other tender fruits. As is well known the orange is an evergreen and it stands our winters without protection. The pomegranates, lemons, some of them as large as a baby's head, are truly wonderful to see. The magnolia is destined to make this section known the world over. This wonderful fig will grow up where and without care or attention—just cut a twig from a tree and stick it in the ground and in a month it will have young figs.

A few days ago I casually mentioned to a Mr. Souer, one of our prominent citizens, that I was formerly a resident of Richmond, Ky., and he told me he had a kinsman by marriage there, Leslie P. Evans, of the State Bank & Trust Co., and that Mr. Evans had spent several months a short time ago out on his ranch on the San Antonio River. A Mr. C. E. S. Holland, formerly of Henry County, vice-president of the First National here, is president of the Inter-Coastal Waterways Commission of a canal from the Mississippi River to the Rio Grande. This canal is projected along the coast of Louisiana and Texas, connecting the numerous inlets and rivers in such a manner that the river tugs, boats and tows can be brought from the Mountains of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kentucky and other Ohio and Mississippi states right to our doors. In other words, Victoria although two thousand miles from

Richmond, can get a barge of coal from the hills of old Lee or Estill county and only have a water rate to pay in transit as now having to pay a prohibitory railroad rate that absolutely prevents any coal or coke from being sold in this market. You will marvel when I tell you that coal is \$8.00 a ton as against about \$3.75 in Richmond. But we don't freeze because of this. Every body burns wood. Our river bottoms and much of our prairie lands are covered with a heavy growth of finest hickory, pecan, oak, persimmon, walnut, ash and other hard woods, and we have enough for many years to come. We have not been under the necessity of having any fire this fall except for cooking purposes, and may not be compelled to use any for several weeks yet.

If Mr. Holland's dream of the Inter-Coastal Canal is realized it will simply be another gem in the crown of Old Kentucky, for it looks as if many of her sons wherever they may roam, will be heard from, and while to our shame, we quarrel with ourselves at home, away from the old home, we put on our best behavior and take pride in knowing that we "were bred in Old Kentucky," and he is truly a recreant who is ashamed to stand for the Grand Old Commonwealth among strangers. I don't endorse the abuses or excesses of the night-riding fiends and the mountain ruffians, and as I read of their injuries I blush for my old home—but it is home none the less and they are my people's withal.

When I began this letter I had no idea I would write as lengthy but you must remember I am writing of Texas, and everything here is of the superlative degree, and we know nothing about the second degree at all. A poor man became interested in Texas and Texas development and he cannot say too much, and try if he can, he is unable to exaggerate the opportunities seen on every side. I began to tell what could be done on ten acres, but got on another subject, and failed to do so, but in the near future hope to let your readers know what some men have done on ten acres down here.

As I am writing this Harcourt, my little boy brings in the Climax of last week, the regular letter from home, and I am pained to see the announcement of the death of that splendid woman and friend to me and family and almost a second mother to my wife, Mrs. L. J. Gentry. We all unite in sending our sincerest condolence and sympathy for the members of her family in their great loss and sad bereavement. No feeble word I could say would tend to remove the poignancy of death's shaft. All who knew her knew her only to love her, and we believe this saintly woman is enjoying a life of blessing beyond the grave. Truly as the years pass away, we pass with them, giving our places to those who follow in our footsteps to meet the problems we began and left unsolved, and they in their turn will but follow in a like cycle.

E. G. PARRISH.



FOR YOU AND YOUR WIFE

A cheerful, pretty bedroom will help you to start your day in a cheerful pleasant mood. Its a haven of rest for you to come back to at night. And all day long it is a pleasure to your wife.

To make a pretty bedroom it is more important to have tasteful furniture that harmonizes, than furniture that merely costs a lot. A brass bed, or a pretty white iron bed if you prefer, bureau and chiffonier of light color (birdseye maple is especially pretty) a low rocking chair and one or two straight back chairs to match, a mirror five feet high screwed on to a closet door, a sofa upholstered in cretonne, a chest of drawers covered with the same, and the cretonne repeated in hangings at the window over white muslin curtains, a light colored rug on the floor,—all this does not cost very much, if you buy from us, and makes a pretty room. Come in and talk it over.

Don't forget to get a STEARNS & FOSTER mattress. That is what makes your bedroom a haven of rest. No other mattress is so comfortable.

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## Small Things

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